



**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
**GRAFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD  
GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519  
(508) 839-5421

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**MINUTES**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
December 15, 2015  
Conference Room F  
7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Laura Often, Vice Chair  
Peter Carlson, Secretary  
Teri Turgeon, Member  
Maureen Cohen, Member

**Members Absent:** Daryl Rynning

**Student** Bianca Carangelo  
**Representatives:** Hannah Kelley

**Also Present:** Dr. James Cummings, Superintendent of Schools  
Tracey Calo, Assistant Superintendent  
Daniel Gale, Finance Director

**Call to Order – Open Session**

1. Chairperson's Update: Mrs. Often opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.
  - a. Comments from the public - None
2. Educational Reports
  - b. Natures Classroom: Ms. Cohen, Ms. Clark and students from both North Street School and Millbury Street School were present to discuss their recent trip to Natures Classroom in New Hampshire Dec 7<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Both Ms. Cohen and Ms. Clark offered a video presentation which outlined their journey. This year's trip consisted of four night and five days, noting last year was only 2.5 days. At Natures Classroom their main focus was learning and understanding the "Four C'S which are Cooperation, Commitment, Communication and Care. This trip taught the students to learn more about themselves and how to work closely with others. After attending this trip, students realized they can do so much more than they ever imagined. Students brought a journal on the trip, making daily entries which focused on obstacles they'd overcome. On this trip, students also learned how to work with teams and how to rely on each other. Mrs. Turgeon stated that this was an amazing edition to Grafton field trips; it was a life changing experience. Mrs. Turgeon would like to see if there was a way

to help make it possible for every student to attend especially if there was a hardship involved. Ms. Cohen said in the spring they would meet with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade to discuss the trip and answer questions. This would give families time to plan, before reaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Mrs. Often suggested early fundraising; begin in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade to assist students when they reach 6<sup>th</sup>. The Students present outlined their favorite parts of the trip, which included the canoe challenge, survival day, ropes course, pioneer village and campfire nights which included group "skits". Both Ms. Clark and Ms. Cohen stated it was an awesome experience for all who attended and the 6<sup>th</sup> graders were wonderful.

### 3. General Business

- a. Initial Field Trip Request: Grafton Music Teachers Peter Singley and Ms. Elsworth were present to discuss a field trip proposal and request the Committee's support. The trip was to Walt Disney World in Florida taking approximately 40 students from the GMS Jazz Band & Select Chorus group. While in Disney, students will perform in a professional setting with the Disney Performing Arts Program, during the Magic Music Days. Students will perform in front of a live audience within the Disney resort. The anticipated dates were June 23-27, 2016. The estimated cost of the trip was \$1,299.00. Mrs. Turgeon stated that she had once chaperoned this trip noting it was a life changing experience for students. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson to approve the Jazz Band/Select Chorus Field Trip on or about June 23, 2017. Motion seconded by Mrs. Turgeon. Motion carried 4-0 School Committee, 2-0 School Representatives.
- b. FY17 Budget Overview: Dr. Cummings, School Superintendent and Finance Director Dan Gale gave a preliminary overview of the FY17 Budget. Dr. Cummings noted that they would be giving a more defined presentation in January. They had a challenge before them to stretch all dollars to maximize growth. They reviewed what they considered the FY17 assumptions relative to circuit breaker, Chapter 90 and entitlement grants, noting the override had helped, giving significant stability. Dr. Cummings noted that without the override funding, they would be entering FY17 minus 30 staff members. Enrollment had been on course, growing each year making it tough to predict number of students registering for kindergarten and preschool. Dr. Cummings discussed the Special Education increased costs. He noted that some students had intensive needs and the tuitions associated with these were high. Transportation costs would increase a bit but it was standard for that to go up a bit each year. Dr. Cummings reviewed each line item and their structures within his budget. Dr. Cummings felt he'd have a more definitive timeline on priorities by the next meeting in January. Dr. Cummings said the Technology budget may be revisited, noting they already had a "backlog" on equipment and did not want to go back into that phase again. Mrs. Often asked if we could ask for more funding possibly from the Town's side. Mrs. Turgeon felt going back to the town to ask for more funds would be too much after the override was approved. Mrs. Cohen wanted to

be sure decisions were based on Good to Great, don't lose site of the great moving forward. More budget information would be available by the January 2016 meeting.

- c. Subcommittee Assignments – Held to a later date
  - d. School Committee Goals – Held to a later date
4. School Committee Member Reports
- a. Mr. Carlson said the next CIPC meeting was scheduled for December 21<sup>st</sup>. Dr. Cummings and Mr. Gale would be presenting at 8:30 that evening.
  - b. Mrs. Often attended her first wellness committee meeting, attending as a School Committee Member. The meeting was a great first step and discussion was productive. They may divide into subcommittees; administrators, parents, nursing staff, Dr. Cummings and Ms. Calo. She also attended one of the new parent workshops, stating they were fantastic. Mrs. Often and Mrs. Cohen both attended the MASC conference; it was a good experience with great speakers and insightful seminars.
  - c. Mrs. Often stated that this was the last meeting for Mrs. Turgeon. She read a letter submitted by Mrs. Rynning, which thanked Mrs. Turgeon for her years of service. Mrs. Often, Mr. Carlson and Mrs. Cohen each spoke, thanking Mrs. Turgeon for her years of service, noting Mrs. Turgeon was a strong advocate for students and they would miss some of her provoking questions. All members would miss her; particularly for her insight, passion and knowledge, she unquestionably made the district better. Bianca Carangelo thanked Mrs. Turgeon and wished her well.
5. Superintendent's Report
- a. District Update: Dr. Cummings thanked all students, parents, and staff who assisted during the holidays, fundraising events. The fundraising efforts were impressive across the entire district. He attended the NGES breakfast with Santa and thanked all involved. Dr. Cummings thanked the PTG for their support with the Andy's Attic Fundraiser in Worcester it was a great success. Dr. Cummings noted the events coming up in January; parent workshops, Parent Child Book Club, and What's Up With Math.
6. Future Agenda Planning
- a. Budget Workshop
  - b. Policy Workshop
  - c. Discuss and review the timeline for the new School Committee member; advertising, interview process and appointment.
7. Approval of Minutes – None

8. Financial Report

- a. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson that the School Committee approve Warrant #22 dated November 25, 2015 in the amount of \$385,071.10. Motion seconded by Mrs. Turgeon. Motion carried 4-0 School Committee 2-0 School Representatives.
- b. A motion was made by Mrs. Cohen to approve Warrant # 24 dated December 10, 2015 in the amount of \$348,181.18. Motion seconded by Ms. Carangelo. Motion Carried School Committee 2-0 (2 abstained) and 2-0 Student Representatives.

9. Policy:

- a. Section I Instruction: A motion was made by Mr. Carlson to accept IGA Curriculum Development as a second reading. Motion seconded by Mrs. Turgeon. Motion carried 4-0 School Committee and 2-0 School Representatives.

10. Correspondence – None

At 9:00 p.m. a motion was made by Mrs. Turgeon to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. Carlson. Motion carried 4-0 School Committee and 2-0 Student Representatives.

Respectfully submitted

Cindy Ide  
Recording Secretary